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REGENTS MOVE FORWARD TO COMMERCIALIZE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

BATON ROUGE -- Funding for three private companies to assess the commercialization potential of new technologies emerging from Louisiana's universities was approved by the Board of Regents at its May 25 board meeting.

"Our objective was to select private-sector business experts outside of the Louisiana university community who can provide an independent assessment for technologies emerging from our universities" said Commissioner of Higher Education E. Joseph Savoie. "This will give the institutions information that can be used in marketing their technologies more effectively to private industry."

The companies, which will evaluate selected technologies in terms of technical feasibility, intellectual property issues, market assessment, resource identification, and strategy recommendations, were selected from a field of six. They are: First Principals, Inc. of Cleveland Ohio; Beta-Rubicon LLC, Fayetteville, Arkansas; and Microtec Associates of Fairport, NY.

The Board's selections were based on company proposals that outlined a "typical" technology and commercialization assessment. Microtec, selected on the basis of expertise in the micro technologies industries, will limit its evaluations to microtechnology-related submissions.

According to Savoie, the companies will be required to execute non-disclosure agreements prohibiting public disclosure of any related confidential information provided. Information regarding individual technologies will pass directly from the university to the Louisiana Partnership for Technology and Innovations, which will deliver the information to the evaluating firms. The Regents will not have access to the details of the individual technologies.

Funding for the initiative is through the Board of Regents Support Fund and

U.S. Department of Commerce-sponsored Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Technology (EPSCoT). The Department of Commerce is funding the entire \$200,000 university technology assessment component of EPSCoT.

The EPSCoT grant, awarded by Commerce to the Board in January 1999, includes six separate initiatives to accelerate the commercialization of university-based technologies by promoting technology-based economic development and growth in Louisiana and building mutually beneficial relationships among the State's higher education. The program is being administered through the Regents' office of Sponsored Programs, with assistance provided by the Louisiana Partnership for Technology and Innovation, and the Louisiana Department of Economic Development.
